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Strengthening collaboration with the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names

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Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management the report prepared by the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, which will be made available in the language of submission only from the website of the Committee (http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html). The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the report and the associated background document and to express its views on the way forward with regard to strengthening the coordination and coherence of geospatial information management with the Group of Experts, including endorsing principles of cooperation between the two bodies.

Summary of the report

At its sixth session, held in New York from 3 to 5 August 2016, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 6/112, in which it took note of the ongoing work of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names to modernize its working methods and strengthen its relationship with the Committee of Experts regarding place names. In the decision, the Bureau of the Committee of Experts was requested to engage in a dialogue with the Group of Experts, with a view to defining an effective relationship between the two bodies and how best to use the opportunity of back-to-back sessions in 2017. The potential synergies and possible areas of collaboration between the Group of Experts and the Committee of Experts were recognized through the adoption, in July 2016, of Economic and Social Council resolution 2016/27 on strengthening institutional arrangements on geospatial information management, particularly with regard to strengthening the coordination and coherence of global geospatial information management, capacity-building, norm-setting, data collection, data dissemination and data sharing as critical needs for Member States. In addition, in decision 29/101, adopted at its twenty-ninth

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session, the Group of Experts on Geographical Names encouraged its Bureau to define the relationship between the Group of Experts and the Committee of Experts.

In its report, the Group of Experts details the series of tasks and activities undertaken with the Bureau of the Committee as part of efforts to strengthen collaboration and implement the above-mentioned decisions. The background document on building bridges between the Group of Experts and the Committee of Experts, prepared by the Bureau of the Group of Experts, substantively anchors these activities and includes common principles and a proposed cooperation model for the two bodies. The report before the Committee of Experts also includes information on the first meeting convened between the two Bureaux in February 2017; on the consultative exercise conducted to seek agreement on the common principles and the cooperation model; and on the preparation and staging of back-to-back joint activities in each of the intergovernmental sessions to be held in August 2017. The Committee of Experts is requested to consider and endorse the common principles of cooperation and support future joint activities, including a joint side event on fundamental geospatial data themes and geographical, cultural and political names to be held on the margins of the fifth High-level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management, to be convened in Mexico City in November 2017.